



Newsletter of the

Hawai'i Bromeliad Society

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HONOLULU, HAWAI'I

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MARCH MEETING COMBINES BUSINESS & PLEASURE

Because what's more pleasurable for HBS members than a hands-on visit to help tame a friend's bromeliad patch!

This Saturday, March 26, we will conduct our third annual field trip to visit and help maintain Nancy Ekern's garden in Mānoa. A long-time Hawai'i Bromeliad Society member, Paul Ekern was constantly working among his bromeliads. He was always generous in lending us unusual and blooming varieties for our shows. After his death, his wife Nancy asked us for some help in keeping up the garden, since she was not the green thumb in the family. We have gone there once a year for the past two years, so this will be our third trip.

But business before pleasure (unless business is pleasure—or pleasure is your business). First, we will have our business meeting at Lyon's Arboretum at noon. We will then regroup at the Mānoa Elementary School parking lot, where we will car pool to Nancy's house, since parking is limited there.

Members are asked to bring gloves, garden implements like clippers and hand shovels, mosquito repellent, sun block, and garbage bags. If it is rainy, do not wear your Sunday best, because it is dirty work.

In case we miss our connections, Nancy's address is 3133 Huelani Place, in upper Mānoa.



We're not saying Nancy has pokey bromeliads—but come dressed for work (pineapple pickers, c. 1957; from *Talking Hawai'i's Story: Oral Histories of an Island People*).

COMING ATTRACTIONS

From our Program Chair Lynette:

- Home & Garden Visits
In keeping with travel—and blooming—schedules, we will try to arrange home visits to Marie Grininger in Kalama Valley, and to Val and Randy Wong in Nu'uaniu.
- Business & (Plant) Welfare
We hope to schedule a regular meeting with a focus on bromeliad diseases and treatments.
- In response to a suggestion that we barter working on the Arboretum's bromeliad garden in lieu of paying for our meeting room, Tom noted that he and Randy have been working on the area, but that it is difficult to maintain with volunteer help. Tom will talk with Liloa Dunn about the Arboretum's master plan for the area. But sometime soon, we hope to schedule a volunteer work morning prior to our business meeting.

2011 OFFICERS OF THE HAWAI'I BROMELIAD SOCIETY

CO-CHAIRS

Laura St. Denis & Susan Andrade

TREASURER

Tessie Labra

HOSPITALITY

Lum Keith

NEWSLETTER

Terese Leber

VICE CHAIR & PROGRAMS

Lynette Wageman

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY

Val Wong

MEMBERSHIP

Raleigh Ferdun

www.hawaiibromeliadsociety.org

REPORT OF THE MEETING OF FEBRUARY 26, 2011

Lyon Arboretum meeting room, 12:05 – 3:00 p.m.

ATTENDING: Susan Andrade, Betty Chang, Emily Darrow, Raleigh Ferdun, Karen Gollero, Marie Grininger, Sam Kagesa, Lum Keith, Tessie Labra, Terese Leber, Sally Mist, Bob Moffitt, Stan Schab, Laura St. Denis, Tom Stuart, Lynette Wageman, Val and Randy Wong; [GUEST: Tom's friend, the landscaper]

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Laura convened the meeting. Tom announced that he had some free tickets to the upcoming Windward Orchid Society's Spring 2011 show, scheduled for March 18–20 in the King Intermediate School Gym. The event, which is the biggest of its kind in Honolulu, combines a plant sale with educational sessions on a variety of topics relating to growing not just orchids but other plants as well, including bromeliads, cacti and succulents, and African violets. It was noted that the HBS has sponsored a table at this event, and could do so again (we've already got a big HBS banner). A show-and-tell session will be organized on how to plan for and display plants at such events.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Tessie reported that the society has a balance of \$1,442.08, with checks outstanding to the Bromeliad Society International, for \$100, and to Lyon Arboretum, for \$250.

MINUTES/NEWSLETTER: The following corrections were made to the minutes/newsletter of the previous meeting:

Lynette Wageman is 2011 Vice Chair of the Society; Hazel Wong, Betty Chang, and Sally Mist comprised the nominating committee for the officers; and Marie Grininger received and circulated the invitation from the Mānoa Heritage Center for docent training.

Members decided that minutes/newsletters/meeting reminders will be sent to members' email addresses, unless print copies are requested. Corrected and approved minutes/newsletters will also be printed and archived in the HBS library.

HOSPITALITY: Our refreshment hosts for March are Raleigh—juice; Randy and Val—chips and dip; and Lum—cookies. In April, Tom is on the hook for juice, and Hazel for chips and dip.

MEMBERSHIP & DUES: Raleigh reminded everyone to send him any changes in contact information, including email, and to make sure that their dues payments are properly recorded.

LIBRARY: Lynette reported that *Tillandsia II: The World's Most Unusual Airplants*, by Paul T. Isley III (Botanical Press, 2009) has been added to the HBS library, and that she will make a sign to mark the Society's shelves at the Arboretum.

PROGRAMS: See "Coming Attractions" on page 1.

OLD BUSINESS: Raleigh reported that he had a container of HBS receipts and other material, primarily from 1995 to 2005. He will give the material to Lynette to evaluate and to keep or discard, as she deems fit.

AUCTION: Even after Peter De Mello's great talk and *Tillandsia* sale, HBS members had enough energy and money for a spirited auction, conducted by Tom. The bidding was hot and heavy, and among the plants scooped up by canny buyers were a number of *Achmea*, including an *Ae. gamosepala*, *Ae. kertesziae*, and *Ae. orlandiana*

WITH SPECIAL THANKS TO BOB MOFFITT: A special treat for HBS members were large orchid cuttings brought in by Betty. Bob has identified the plants as *Arachnis hookeriana* or possibly the hybrid *Ar. maggie oei*, which is a cross of *Ar. hookeriana* with *Ar. flos-aeris*. *Ar. hookeriana* is from Borneo, Malaya, and Viet Nam. It likes bright sunlight and strong air movement. Bob didn't know what light conditions Betty was growing them in, but the plants should probably be brought out to sunnier areas slowly to prevent sunburn.

For the March meeting, Lynette notes that she now has three copies of *Bromeliaceae of Venezuela* by Francisco Oliva-Esteva and Julian A. Steyermark. According to Amazon.com, a brand new copy sells for \$195. Lynette located a "used" one for \$50, and suggests that \$40 would be a very reasonable price to offer. Please check your bromeliad book shelves, and take these volumes off Lynette's hands. We already have one copy in our library, and space restrictions make it difficult to add more copies.

PETER DE MELLO SHARES EXPERTISE—AND LOTS OF TILLANDSIA



There was a time when Peter De Mello did not realize that *Tillandsia* constitute the largest bromeliad genus, with over a thousand varieties, including fourteen types of Spanish moss. At home throughout South America, the Caribbean, and South Florida, *Tillandsia* came into Peter's life as a way to provide shade for his orchids. He has now been specializing in *Tillandsia* for over thirty years, and this February, he graciously—and entertainingly—shared some of what he's learned.

Tillandsia can flourish in an enormous variety of places and conditions. Peter grows them from seeds, which can take years. Although some varieties are self-fertilizing, other *Tillandsia* are pollinated by moths, birds, or wind—and in Peter's case, by hand and even sometimes by breath, as he blows seeds onto trees or other sites. This level of effort enables him to create a variety of hybrids, including a number of popular *ionantha* crosses.

Peter emphasized that *Tillandsia* can grow almost anywhere—on a rock, piece of wood, or a crack in a wall—but they don't like a lot of water or soil. They can be held in place in pots with sphagnum moss, coir, or even anti-termite sand, but attaching tillandsias with a hot glue gun is a definite no-no (although shoe glue can work). Similarly, because copper oxide will kill *Tillandsia*, they should not be held in place with copper or brass wires. He recommends galvanized or stainless steel.

Tillandsia can be allowed to dry out, but do need some time to acclimatize to specific microclimates. The amount of sun and shade they receive impacts the color of their leaves, which can range from purple to green to gray. Green *Tillandsia* can in fact be sunburned much more easily than silver varieties.

Peter prefers to fertilize with a weak fertilizer, like fish emulsion, in a 2-1-1 ratio, about once a month, using a pump sprayer, as *Tillandsia* do get some nourishment through new roots.

To encourage your *Tillandsia* to flower, he suggests stressing them a little by moving them.

From his own *Tillandsia* collection, Peter brought in a number of spectacular varieties to show—and to sell—including *capitata*, *crocota*, *duratii*, *funckiana*, *purpurea*, and *rothii*.

And if you still have questions about your *Tillandsia*, you can ask Peter at Kuuki Plants and Flowers, Inc., 132 Ragsdale Place, Honolulu, HI 96817; 808-595-7996 or 808 325-6533 in Kona.



LEFT: So, Peter, how do I pick the right spot for my *Tillandsia*?
“Stand on your porch and throw it as far as it will go, because where it lands, that's where it will grow.”

ABOVE: Marie and Sam swap bromeliad tales with Peter.



ABOVE: When Peter said *Tillandsia* were ageotropic, I didn't know it meant he could make them levitate.

RIGHT: Master Gardener grows *Tillandsia* from ear—no shoe glue involved.

BELOW: And don't forget next Saturday . . .



LYON ARBORETUM
SPRING PLANT SALE
SATURDAY, APRIL 2, 2011, 9AM-2PM
NEAL BLAISOU EXHIBITION HALL
THE BIGGEST SALE OF THE YEAR!
NEW ANTHURIUMS HAWAIIAN PLANTS,
EXOTIC FRUIT TREES, BROMELIADS, TILLANDSIAS,
GINGERS, HELICONIAS, DESERT ROSE, CACTUS &
SUCCULENTS, HERBS, SEEDS,
AND MUCH MORE!
JAMS AND JELLIES, LEI HAWAII T-SHIRTS, EXPERT PLANT
CARE ADVICE. FOR MORE INFORMATION 988-0456
ADMISSION IS FREE

